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842 *chên-wu chai* 眞武齋, (a monthly fast, on the 1st days of the
785 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th moons); *Tsao-wang chai* 竈王齋 (1st,
261 15th, 24th of each moon); *chiu huang chai* 九皇齋 and *pei-tou chai* 北斗齋, (9th moon, first 9 days, or whole moon); *ch'éng huang chai* 城皇齋, (1st and 15th of each moon); *yüeh-lo chai* 月落齋, (last day of each moon); *jih-lo chai* 日落齋, (daily till sunset); *ch'ang chai* 長齋, (for 3 years, or sometimes for life).

Some, in the hope of progeny, do various good deeds, such as making roads or building bridges.

842 Anti-abortion charms *an-t'ai fu* 安胎符, are sought by
778 women who believe they have the *pao-t'ai sha* 包胎煞 or the *mai érh sha* 埋兒煞; that is, that they are under the curse of abortion or still-birth. The sorcerer is called in, and the woman has to give him a pair of her trousers, a pint of rice, five kinds of coloured thread and an egg; this last is taken home by the sorcerer and worshipped. All must be carried out without the husband's knowledge.

Others *p'ei hsiung ching* 佩雄精 carry a charm made up of the purest *hsiung huang* 雄黃 (realgar).

Some make a pilgrimage to a sacred mountain 朝山 *ch'ao shan*; there they steal a baby-idol 童子 *t'ung-tzŭ*, or a *lo-han* 羅漢, and take it home. They also spend money on building temples or in printing books which extol the idols, such as the *pei-tou ching* 北斗經, the *Tsao-wang ching* 竈王經 or the *Kuan-yin ching* 觀音經.

Another way is to steal the shoes or underclothing of the wife of the city god, or of Kuan-Yin. These are taken home, put under the pillow and slept on. The virtue is supposed to lie in the fact that they are stolen.

An axe is hung on the underside of the bed in the hope of thus obtaining a son, *ch'uang hsia hsüan fu* 床下懸斧. Or the ox sinew from a crossbow is worn as a girdle; 牛筋弦帶 *niu-chin-hsien tai*.

787 Childless people also call in a fortune-teller to examine
842 the horoscopes of the couple to see if they match; *k'ai nien kéng* 開年庚 or *p'ai ssŭ chu* 排四柱. If any of the fine elements are lacking, some person is invited to stand surety. For example, if the element gold should be missing, some one with

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the gold radical in his name or someone with plenty of the gold element in his horoscope will be asked to be surety. Or butchers, priests, scholars and military men are invited if the elements show a weakness in those directions.

In cases where the marriage date has proved unlucky 年月不吉 *nien-yüeh pu chi*, the whole process of finding a lucky day and holding the marriage ceremony is gone through again, that sons may be born.

When the unfitness is in the girl's horoscope, making the union unlucky, friends set to work to prove that her nativity characters 八字 *pa tzŭ* have been incorrect from birth, 婚頭錯了 *hun t'ou ts'o-liao;* a change is made and the marriage ceremony is gone through a second time.

A barren woman goes to the temple of the goddess of Mercy, *sung tzŭ Kuan-Yin* 送子觀音, who always has plenty of children around her. She pulls out some of her own hair, and ties it round the arm or neck of a child-idol 拴童子 shuan t'ung-tsu. When she leaves she calls the spirit of this idol to follow her home. Sometimes she goes to the priest and gives him her special reasons for desiring a son, and she receives from him a *tan* 單, which document is then burnt as an offering to the idol.

Sometimes arrangements are made with a family that has plenty of children to buy from it a new-born babe, a few hundreds of taels being perhaps paid for a healthy male child. As soon as born it is carried in the night to its new mother, who goes through a feigned confinement 假裝坐月 *chia chuang tso yüeh*. The child is reared on sugar and water and other concoctions.

Families sometimes obtain a son in exchange for a girl and a liberal sum in hard cash. In such cases it is always an insult to speak of the boy as adopted.

Besides the above efforts made by the family itself to procure sons, the friends of the family may do a great deal by special presents. Thus, a melon may be placed in a chair and escorted with music, red umbrella and much ceremony to the house of the childless people. There it is put on the family altar. If a child is born later a feast must be provided for those who gave the melon, or there will be bad feeling.

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CHAPTER III

MARRIAGES 婚姻 *Hun Yin.*

584 Betrothal may take place very early; friends will sometimes betroth their unborn children.

Marriage with one of the same family name is forbidden by law; but such marriages do take place when there is a different ancestry, 同姓不同宗 *t'ung hsing pu t'ung tsung.*

A male go-between is called 媒 *mei*, and a female is 妁 *cho.* Marriages are said to be arranged by 父母之命媒妁之言 *fu mu chih ming mei cho chih yen,* "Parents' will and middleman's words." The children are supposed to have nothing to do with the arrangements, but in fact their likes and dislikes count for a good deal.

Another name for the go-between is *hung-yeh* 紅葉 red leaf. The term originated in the T'ang dynasty. A female palace-slave whose life was made bitter by her imperial mistress wrote her troubles on a red leaf and threw this into the moat. A young scholar got it and forwarded a reply in the same romantic way. Later some of the slaves were married off by imperial orders, and the girl fell to the lot of the scholar without their knowing till afterwards that they had been the corresponding parties.

584 787 Preparing the horoscope before marriage is called *k'ai pa tzŭ* 開八字, preparing the eight characters. These characters give the year, month, day and hour of birth. The

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saying is, "The man's horoscope is never false; the woman's never true." A fortune-teller is called in to examine the girl's horoscope, and if he finds it is an unlucky one it will be falsified before being reported to the family with whom a marriage is sought.

It is said that in the time of Han Wên Ti 漢文帝 a barbarian chief wished for marriage relationships with the Chinese. The Chinese professed willingness, but warned the barbarian Man-tzŭ that it would be unlucky for them if marriages were made with unsuitable horoscopes. They were then able to decline marriage on the ground that 八字不合 *pa tzŭ pu ho*, the horoscopes do not agree. To this day, in refusing a proposal of marriage the people almost always say *jên k'ên hun pu k'ên* 人肯婚不肯, "We are willing but the horoscope is not."

The parents who seek a bride for their son first find a middleman, or more likely he finds them. They ask him to take presents to the home of a certain girl and to beg that her horoscope may be sent them for examination. The middleman has probably already paved the way, and he soon brings back the horoscope, which is put on the family altar for from 3 to 8 days to see if anything happens, good or bad. If a bowl is broken during this time, or something lost, or a cat or dog dies, the horoscope is promptly returned as being unlucky. This is called *t'ui hung kêng* 退紅庚. If on the contrary some piece of luck befalls during this period, an astrologer is called in to examine the two horoscopes and see if they agree. The comparison may show upper, middle or lower degree of suitability. If the boy's parents are satisfied with the horoscope they send the middleman to the girl's parents to say they feel quite unworthy to be related to such an exalted family, but since there was such condescension they were willing to fix the agreement *hsia p'in shu* 下聘書, *hui hua* 回話, or *ch'a hua* 插花. Much depends on the go-between, and as it is difficult to prevent bribery there is great need for caution and private enquiry.

The girl's parents reply 寫允書 *hsieh yün shu*, generally saying their daughter is weak and useless, but they are willing

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BOOK IV—THE SUPERNATURAL

CHAPTER I

SPIRIT RAPPING (請神), *ch'ing shên*

● 787 This is rather a game than any real intercourse with the spirits, but it is very difficult to fix the boundary between the two; worship and play seem to dovetail the one into the other.

To invite the table spirit, *cho-tzŭ shên* (桌子神): table rapping. One table is put face downwards on another with a common rice basin between them. A person then takes hold of each of the four corners of the upturned table, and tries to hold it steady. When the spirit comes the table moves up and down or turns round.

To invite the spirit of the carrying pole, *pien tan shên* (請扁擔神). The pole is laid across the table, two persons blindfolded hold the ends, and try to keep the pole down. When the spirit comes, the pole moves up and down in spite of them.

To invite the rake (*pa*, 笊) spirit. A youth sits with eyes blindfolded and holds a rake upright. The others burn incense and paper and invite the spirit of the rake to come and do the work for them. When the spirit comes the rake is moved and the fuel is gathered by the rake itself apart from human energy.

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To invite the spirit of the seventh virgin, *ch'i ku-niang* (七姑娘). She is said to be the seventh daughter of the Pearly Emperor, and is patronized by girls who want to know what kind of lot may be in store for them. The maiden who is inquiring sits with head covered while others burn incense and paper. 787

To look at the flowers, *kuan hua* (觀花). The girl who inquires for the others is set down in a quiet spot; others burn incense and candles to invite the spirit of the flower garden. She then goes in spirit and thus finds out under which tree the lot of her client is to be cast. If under the palm, fir, or soap trees, the lot will be a bitter one. If under the *kuei hua* the lot will be one of riches and honour. Under the camelia means happiness and peace; the cedar means long life and strength. The person who practises this art is paid for it by the clients.

To invite the spirit of the broom, *sao pa* (掃把) *shên.* The broom is put into a child's hands and the eyes blindfolded, paper and incense are burned and the spirit invited to help the child to sweep the floor. If the floor is not well swept, the child is beaten by the onlookers.

To invite the spirit of the earth bullock. Two youths are blindfolded and set down together. The spirit is invited and when it comes the two youths begin to knock each other's heads till some serious injury is inflicted. Eyes are knocked out, noses broken, and the youth is not infrequently injured for life. Parents forbid the practice, but it is still secretly done in secluded spots.

To invite the stool (*pan têng*, 板凳) god. Two children are blindfolded and set one at each end of a form to hold it down. The spirit is invited and when it comes the stool tilts up or turns round with the children sitting on it.

Ghosts.

Anathematizing the ghost, *chou hsiao shên tzŭ* (咒小神子), is done by such persons as the travelling fortune teller or the itinerant Taoist priest called a 遊方道士. He may go to a house on the excuse that he desires to tell a boy's fortune, 757 787

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757 for which purpose the horoscope is necessary. He mentally
787 carries away the particulars of the horoscope. The bark is then peeled from a growing tree, and the horoscope pasted on the bared part, and anathematized by him for forty-nine days, after which time the piece of the tree with the horoscope is gouged out and taken home, and a small idol made of it, which is also anathematized, till such time as the image speaks; at this juncture it is believed that the child dies.
754 This little idol is further worshipped and taught to do as it
791 is bid. It may even enter houses and steal for its master. Or it may be let loose in an enemy's house for revenge, intimidation or robbery. This last is practised by the following people:

Nuns (尼姑), *ni ku*, *Tao ku* (道姑); *hua ku* (花姑), embroidery women, who very seldom have husbands and are sometimes men in disguise; toothache witch doctors (牙婆), *ya p'o*, who pretend to extract the worm from a diseased tooth by way of the eye; *wen p'o* (穩婆) and *ch'ü shêng* (取生) *p'o*, midwives; or 藥媽媽, medicine mothers; *hsiang* (相) *p'o*, physiognomists; fortune tellers, *suan ming* (算命) *p'o*; and go-betweens in marriages, *mei* (媒) *p'o*.

754 The above classes, on entering a house, are sure to
775 make trouble. If they are meanly or harshly treated, they may let loose a ghost in the house, which will manifest itself in the following ways: short hair will be found in the rice-steamer, or filth of various kinds will find its way into the rice; reeds become transformed into darts and fly at people; the rope on which tobacco leaves are dried becomes a snake to bite the family; twigs become fire-darts to set the house on fire; a paper image steals the family property; tiles are pulled from the roof of the house in the night, or brickbats are thrown into the house in the night; the house is set on fire at any time, but specially in the night, or the shell of the bamboo sprout becomes a living being to frighten people; or they annoy by making the rooster crow at bedtime and the dogs bark all the night through.

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Sometimes large sums of money are paid to have a ghost taken out of the house, but twenty or thirty taels is quite a common price. If the person who let loose the ghost is invited to remove it, he will demand much more than another, but another can do it. When he does find the wooden idol it is burned and it is popularly believed that the person who let the ghost go will suffer, because the spirit will go and harass him. Most Chinese have a great dread of certain objects and houses which are supposed to be haunted, and it is with the greatest difficulty that they can cut clear of this superstition; it should always be borne in mind that such things are very real to them, however silly they may appear to us.

The "Planchette."

To seek the counsel of the spirits by the aid of the stylus, *k'ung chung hsüan pi* (空中懸筆). Various forms of this cult have been in use for many centuries. The present mode is to make a string of silk thread or human hair and suspend it from the roof, with a pen made of peach or willow twig. Directly under this pen is placed a table covered with fine dry river-sand. Incense and paper are burned before the tablet of the stylus house god, the attention of the spirits called and their help besought.

When the spirits come the pencil moves and writes characters on the sand. If nonsense is written, the manager, *chi shou* (乩手), further invokes the spirits by the *k'o t'ou* (kotow) and more incense and paper burning, and when the pencil writes real characters one man reads aloud and another makes a record. Enquiring from a converted *chi shou* as to the possibility of falsifying these pencil motions, he declares that with this kind of stylus there is no trickery, but the pencil does not move without being invited and not always then, and seldom moves to advantage, but he has known it to write wonderfully true things.

The tablets written in the stylus house are of two different sorts, one to the celestials, the other to *lü tsu* (呂祖). They are as follows:

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• 787 天上地下蓬萊洞府仙眞,純陽演正警化孚佑帝君.

The *t'ao chi liu pi* (桃箕柳筆) is a forked branch of a peach tree with willow twig fastened to the lower side of the single point; it resembles a bird with outspread wings and beak, and is supposed to contain the essence of seminal power and divine influence. Two men grasp the prongs of the stylus and hold it over the table of sand; the spirits are invoked and the stylus writes. This is a more degraded method than the former, as the two men who hold the prongs, if of one mind, can write almost anything they please. This form of the stylus is also known as *fu luan chiang chi* (扶鸞降乩).

The most degraded of magic pens is that used by one man, *tu jên mei pi* (獨人墨筆), who pleases himself what he writes.

Sometimes the magic pen will only write nonsense and then he has resort to the following charms to correct the trouble: *chua-hsien fu* (抓仙符), the grasp celestial charm; *chan kuei fu* (斬鬼符), behead-demon charm; *chu yao fu* (誅妖符), kill-demon charm. These charms are all burned before the tablet to the stylus house god.

Necromancy (交邪).

Tsou yin chiang hsiang (走陰降像), to enter Hades and obtain an image. This is done by a male devotee of some idol, whose eyes are blindfolded with five feet of red or black cloth. A charm is made and burned, and he has to drink part of the ashes mixed in water, after which he has to sit on a chair, while another person spatters a mouthful of the charm-water all over his person. This done, he opens his mouth and speaks what is believed to be the revelation from the spirits.

Ch'i shui k'an wan (起水看碗), to lift water and stare into the bowl. This is done by both sexes of all ages. The basin is filled with water, a charm is prepared and burned and the ashes mixed with the water. The reader of the spirits' decrees then stares into the basin and declares he sees and hears wonderful things belonging to another world.

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Ch'i kuang chao p'an (起光照盤), to make the light shine upon the platter. A platter is taken and the necessary charms burned and incantations made over it; it is then handed to the person seeking guidance and light, who is made to look therein, and he may be persuaded to believe that he sees something that will throw light on his path.

To call the immortals and question them as to the happiness or misery and final condition of the departed and as to whether they are able to help or hinder those at present living, is called *kuan hsien* (關仙).

To invite the spirits of departed ancestors, or deceased relatives, to enquire about their state in Hades is *kuan hun chien ch'in* (關魂見親). This is done much in the same way as in the first and second items under this heading.

In curing the demon-possessed, *shou fêng ta hsieh* (收瘋打邪), the demoniac is brought into the presence of the practitioner of the art; a jar is brought into the room and the witch makes many mysterious motions with the fingers, hands and arms. These motions are spoken of as the five-thunder occultism (五雷訣) and the nine-ox strength (九牛搦); by these the demon is supposed to be got into the jar, which is then covered with a white cloth, taken out and buried or carried home by the practitioner. This is an art which demands high payment, and I am informed that in some cases cures have been effected. Lunacy is always attributed to demon possession, and the lot of this unfortunate class is a very hard one indeed. They are often chained to the bed-post or pillar of the house and starved to death, or stoned out of the town by boys, driven from house and home by their relatives, and if violent they are beaten to death. If good-natured they are teased and mocked. They wander about in rags and filth, sleep in temples and caves and are often addicted to many of the lowest vices of mankind.

To divine as to whether a sickness will be fatal or not is called *p'an tuan chi hsiung* (判斷吉凶). The patient's head is covered, while charms, incense and paper are burned and the spirits besought to reveal their will regarding him.

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787 To inquire of the celestials as to whether the position of the ancestral graves is lucky or not, or as to the best site and position of a proposed new family dwelling, is called *ch'a nien fêng shui* (查驗風水). This is done by covering the head and inviting the spirits to make a revelation.

789 *Ta t'ai p'ing pao fu* (打太平保福) is a noisy ceremony at which many of the practices given under sorcery are used before a woman's confinement to ensure a safe delivery. It includes bringing the boxes, *la hsiang tsŭ* (拉箱子). An actor is brought to the house with all his paraphernalia, he dresses as a woman, has his face powdered and painted, after which he jumps and dances in the chief rooms of the house. In some families a stage is erected in an adjoining field for the occasion.

Chuai ssŭ niang tsŭ (踹私娘子), to act the celestial women of the house. These are the *t'ien hsien niang* (天仙) and the *ti hsien niang* (地仙), who are believed to be able to protect life and property and add years to the lives of those in the house. A skilled actor, dressed like a woman, walks and minces up and down the house. At the close of the performance a feast is spread and the actors drink freely of wine and sing lewd songs. This last part is called *p'ei hua* (陪花), to entertain the flower, or the impersonated woman. For this performance the actors are liberally paid. Such performances are almost wholly confined to the well-to-do baser sort.

782 *Ching t'an* (靖壇), to pacify the altar of the lemuria. Some families have a *t'an shên* (壇神) and some have none, but those who have are generally of a low and superstitious character. This altar is generally located on the left-hand side of the chief room of the house. The tablet is sometimes written and at others carved. The families who trace their ancestry from the province of Kiangsi have the altar hung up in a basket on the left-hand side of the heaven and earth tablet. The pacification of this spirit takes place once every three or five years, unless a change is made in the residence. In this ceremony all the practices of ordinary divination are used with many additions, and the ceremony is much

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Setting up the altar for the purpose of divination is an elaborate affair. A chart belonging to the sorcerer is hung up over the family gods; in this chart the *san ch'ing* (三清) have a prominent place. A bushel and a pint measure are filled with grain or dry river-sand, into which sand are stuck lighted candles and incense, all having been previously placed before the sorcerer's chart. The "three pure" are *t'ai ch'ing* (太清), *yü* (玉) *ch'ing* and *shang* (上) *ch'ing*, and are said to correspond to heaven, earth and man. A tablet to the five heads of demons or *wu ch'ang* (五猖) is put under the table; the tablet to all the poor spirits or 寒林 is put up outside the door. The writing being 寒林會上五音五姓孤魂由子等衆, "To the heads of the Society of the orphan spirits of all names and kinds."

To cleanse the altar the divining priests go with beating of gongs and blowing of trumpets to a stream or pool of water and bring back a vessel filled with clean water; this is called *ch'ing shui* (請水). The water is sprinkled all over the altar and vessels, after which the priest opens the ceremony by putting on his robes and worshipping the idols and tablets all round; this is spoken of as *k'ai t'an*, to open the altar.

The priest prepares a genealogy of the sick person, his name, residence, details of the sickness, etc., which is first read to the company and then despatched to the spirit world by burning.

After the despatch has been sent telling of the need, then the company waits to receive the return message from the spirit world.

The divining priest then enters the kitchen and asks the kitchen god to use his good offices on the sick person's behalf, while the family of the sufferer kneel in a row before the kitchen god to implore his assistance.

The repentance ode is chanted and a prayer for the healing of the disease; this is done amid the beating of gongs and drums, and the yelling of the priests who are ably assisted by the juveniles of the family.

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The priest next makes a number of charms, one to be worn on the person, another to be hung on the bed curtains, another for the bedroom door, and one is burned and the ashes put into a basin of water which has been cursed, and is drunk by the sick person. These charms are supposed to drive away the demons from the clothing, the bed and the inward man. This ceremony takes it as a foregone conclusion that all sickness is caused by demons.

After burning paper money in little or great quantities according to the ability of the family, the priest takes the clothes of the sick person and bears them, along with a tablet on which is written his name and genealogy, out to a place overlooking a hollow with water in it. Here the priests assisted by the relatives call back the spirit of the sick person from across the waters, repeating several times the following two sentences, *san hun kuei shên, ch'i p'ai fu t'i* (三魂歸身, 七魄附體); that is, may the three souls and seven spirits return to the body; then they finish up with a weird yell of "come back, come back." Of course when the sick man is in delirium it is believed that the soul has already left his body and gone wandering elsewhere.

Straw or reeds of any kind may be used to make an effigy, and paper clothing is made and put on it. Wine and rice are offered to it. A piece of paper money is ignited and applied to the ears, eyes, nose and mouth. Sometimes a needle is used to prick these four organs; all this is done with incantations, after which the effigy is supposed to become accursed as the substitute of the sick person. It is carried to the sick chamber and is addressed by the sorcerer as *mao ta lang* (茅大郎), great straw gentleman, or as *mao ta chieh* (茅大姐), great straw sister, according to the sex of the sick one. One sorcerer faces the effigy and questions it and another crouches behind it and answers the questions; while a third sits on a chair and pronounces judgement. The effigy is asked from whence he came; and for what purpose. The sorcerer from behind replies that he has come from a great distance purposely to be the substitute and bear the penalty of the sick person, whose name he gives.

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A vegetable knife, scales, three pairs of chopsticks, one charm, one sorcerer's tablet called a *shih tao* (師刀) or master's knife, are collected. The tablet and charm are the property of the sorcerer, while the other things belong to the family. These things the sorcerer gathers together in one hand, swings them round his head, and drops them behind his back; and then all the persons gather round and listen to the reading of the omens of these articles as they lie on the floor and give indications as to the outcome of the sickness. If the three pairs of chopsticks lie in order, recovery is considered to be probable. These chopsticks are spoken of as the *lu ma* (祿馬), emolument horses; if lying in order it means the patient will need them and use them.

The scissors in this affair are known as the *chu ch'üeh* (朱雀), or red bird. Birds are all reckoned unlucky because their beaks are pointed, but birds with red patches or red beaks are much more so, and make trouble or even death in the family. The vegetable knife is spoken of as the white tiger (白虎). If the sharp edge of this knife should lie near the rope handle of the scales, it is reckoned to be a very unpropitious omen; as white is the sign of mourning and the tiger is the most ravenous of wild beasts. The scales are reckoned to be the sick man's body, and whatever falls near this is reckoned to be falling near the sick man himself. If the *ling p'ai* (令牌) or charm falls near the scales it is an indication that the spirits are protecting. The writing inside the tablet is said to be the Pearly Emperor's name. The arm jutting out with the three crosses is said to be the three pure ones, who are believed to be peculiarly fitted for the work of frightening away demons.

The next proceeding is to *fên kua* (分卦), to read the diagrams. These are made of two pieces of bamboo which fit closely and exactly together. The two parts are thrown into the air; if the two flattened sides fall with their faces to the ground, that is called a *yin kua* (陰卦), female diagram; if the flat sides face upwards that is called a *yang kua* (陽卦), male diagram; if one flat and one round side lie upwards that is called a *shên kua* (神卦), spirit diagram. The female diagram is reckoned very unlucky, while the male and spirit

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diagrams are reckoned lucky, especially the latter, and the spirits are invoked repeatedly to give a *shên kua*.

At this juncture the sorcerer enters the sick chamber, *taking the straw effigy and a mug containing an egg.* The sick person draws a deep breath and blows into the mug, which is then covered with a white cloth and firmly tied with a string. The sick person then blows a deeply drawn breath on to the face of the straw effigy, and in this way it is believed that the sickness demon is put into the mug and his life put into the straw substitute, who suffers for him.

A paper tray on which are painted various kinds of demons and called the flowery plate is brought; the candles, incense and other signs of the proceeding are gathered and, together with the mug, are put on a sieve and carried with the effigy outside the door of the house; the sorcerers then put up charms on the bedroom door and in the kitchen. A basin of rice soaked in water, and another basin of dry rice is then put on the sieve; into the latter sticks of lighted incense and lighted candles are stuck; the whole is then carried out to a secluded place, where the effigy is burned; the mug containing the egg is buried and the incense and candles stuck into the ground; the rice is carried home by the sorcerer; the sieve and basins are taken home by the members of the family, but are thrown behind the outside courtyard door for three days before they dare take them inside the house, lest any evil influence should be clinging to them.

When the party returns from escorting out the evil influences, the sorcerer proceeds to take down his chart, burns incense and exhorts the family gods, packs up his sorcerer's paraphernalia, eats a hearty meal, counts the wages of divination and takes his departure.

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If a chicken goes on the roof, it is very unlucky and a sign that fire is likely to come, owing to the red on the rooster's neck, which is like fire. The chicken when caught is beheaded, and the head thrown over the roof of the house; some will not even eat the chicken for fear of fire.

To spill oil or alcohol in the house or on the street is believed to be very unlucky and a certain sign that fire will break out. Any coolie spilling oil on the street is fined or his oil confiscated to pay the expense of pacifying the fire demon.

Rooks chattering in the night is said to be a sign of fire. Sometimes the rooks are driven away, but never killed, as they are reckoned to be very lucky birds.

Rats removing their young from a house, a snake twisting round a bamboo to get to the sun, a shower of meteors or a meteor falling are signs that fire is likely to break out. In order to drive away the fire demon the following black arts are resorted to :—

Shua shui lung, to play the water dragon. The dragon is made of a plaited bamboo framework about one foot in diameter and perhaps 21 feet long. Each family prepares a bucket of water and throws it over the dragon to drown the fire demon.

Ch'ien sung huo hsing, to take away the fire star. This is supposed to be the planet Mars, which is also said to be the star of evil rumours. When this affair is carried out in detail many of the ceremonies of the former fire and pestilence ritual are gone through.

Ta wên chiao, to pacify the pestilence god. In times of cholera the people became very excited and everything possible is done to appease and deceive the demon. They even go to the length of having the New Year in the middle of summer. The fresh door-gods are put on the doors, new scrolls are written and pasted on the door posts, the idols worshipped and incense burned, with the idea of cheating the demon and making it believe that it is midwinter and thus cool weather.

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BOOK VII—PLAUSIBLE PRETENTIONS

(扯謊壩) THE LIARS' MART (天話街), *T'ien hua chieh*

The above name is applied to the Yamen or temple court-yards or any place where there is concourse of people, and where the fortuneteller, geomancer, physiognomist, sorcerer and witch doctors have their stands. To try and follow these men into all the intricacies of their dark and crooked ways is impossible. It will be our plan to find out what they pretend to accomplish, under what pretences they obtain a living and how the people are fleeced by them. They are divided into classes; the first to mention is the business of the Startler, *Ching shêng i* (驚生意), under which the following take their places:—

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The *ts'é tzŭ* (測字) tells fortunes by dissecting characters and putting them together again.

Suan ming (算命), the fortuneteller. This class differs from the former in that it may pretend to define a whole life, while those who dissect characters generally confine themselves to one particular matter. The fortunetellers are divided into two schools, one called the *chang chang tzŭ* (張張子), who tells a person's fortune and gives it to his client in writing; the other is known as the *t'ieh pan suan* (鐵板算), who are mostly blind, who after hearing the client tell the fortune *viva voce*.

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791/787 *P'u kua* (卜卦) is to forecast future events by means of the eight diagrams, to divine.

K'an hsiang (看相). The physiognomist makes the book *Liu chuang shên hsiang* (柳莊神相) by Shui Ching of the Han dynasty, or the *ma i* (麻衣) *hsiang* by Ch'ên Tuan of the Sung dynasty the basis of his art.

791/789 The following are some of the things they pretend to be able to do:—

They guarantee that their clients will get by raffle the funds of the joint stock company. Several people join in a company when they want to get a larger sum together than they could otherwise do at one time, but by paying in monthly instalments they can manage it. The fund is raffled for each month at the home of one of their number. Some families who want the money quickly appeal to this class for assistance to get the lucky number.

They undertake the protection of a family from demons and snakes. They also fix the site of a dwelling house, the choice of a lucky day to begin building, and the lucky day for hoisting the top beam of the house.

They fix a lucky day for funerals, marriages and almost everything, by an appeal to the stars. Each day has a governing star and they decide whether the day star agrees with the birth star of the individual. This is one of the most common of the methods of fixing a lucky day, and it is done by what is known as the *fa chia*, one of the schools of geomancy.

They fix a lucky day by what is known as an appeal to the three things which harmonize; that is, heaven, earth, and man. This method is known as the *hsing chia* (形家), or *k'an yü* (堪輿) *chia*, and is another of the schools of geomancy.

Wu ho (合) and *liu ho*. They tell fortunes by an appeal to the five elements, gold, wood, water, fire and earth, or by an appeal to the four points of the compass with the zenith and nadir. These methods are used by fortunetellers and geomancers.

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method of going round the country preying on the feelings and superstitions of the people is called by themselves "repairing the viscera temple" (修五臟廟). While doing this the priest goes from door to door and distributes his cards and a little later he comes back to collect the money from each house.

Mendicant priests go round the streets with a note-book and take the names of those who give subscriptions. Or they may sell pills at a high price, the profits going to the priesthood. A band of mendicant priests, seven or eight in number, will go through the streets, one carrying the idol, another the burning incense, singing, while another attends to the music, leaving the remainder to look after the collecting of money; some people give large sums to this class as a good speculation.

One class of priest often carries a kneeling-mat and a whip for driving away demons and wears a high crowned hat made of human hair and a yellow robe, which, when spread out, does for a sleeping coverlet. The sandals on his feet denote that he is a pilgrim, the staff in his hand is to beat the unruly; at one end of it is fixed a little spade with which he buries any unclean thing.

THE NINE STARTLERS (九驚), *chiu ching*

The first is *Mang Tzŭ* (瞎子) *ching*, the blind man who plays the guitar and tells fortunes. Next, *Liu* (流) *liu ching*, the rambling fortuneteller who bears a bamboo clapper and goes through the streets seeking for work. *Tsui* (嘴) *tzŭ ching* uses a bird of some kind to pick out a character from a box with which character he divines for his clients. *To* (朵) *to ching* divines from a character picked out by the client himself. The *Tai* (帶) *tzŭ ching* is a fortuneteller who carries the characters and explanation already written on his person. The *P'ing* (平) *ching* is a fortuneteller who sets up his stand and speaks about his trade and attracts customers. The *Lo* (挪) *ching* sings, and the *Hai* (海) *tzŭ ching* plays the harp as they practise their arts. The *Hua* (花) *hua ching* is a female fortuneteller.

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PHYSIOGNOMISTS (相師), *hsiang shih*

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787 *Ma i* (麻衣) *hsiang fa*, *Liu chuang* (柳莊) *hsiang fa* and *Ta ch'ing* (大清) *hsiang fa* are well-known books on this science.

Internal physiognomy is called *nei hsiang*, which includes a study of the fæces, voice, etc., and the external physiognomy, *w'ai hsiang*, includes a study of the bones; hair growing in ears, nose and eyebrows; colour of the face, etc.

Face physiognomy, *mien hsiang*, includes the study of the *San t'ing* (亭) *wu kuan*, the three divisions of the face and the five organs. The *san t'ing* are the *t'ien t'ing* or brow, the *chung t'ing* or nose, the *hsia t'ing* or chin.

Shou hsiang, or palmistry, deals with the *chiu kung* (九宮) or nine places where there is fulness round the palm of the hand, upon which much stress is laid.

The science is based on the following ten characters, which are supposed to represent ten types of Chinese face:—

Yu (由), weak brow; *chia* (甲), chin weak; *shên* (申) chin and brow weak; *t'ien* (田), lacking brow and chin; *t'ung* (同), mouth prominent, chin lacking; *wang* (王), equally balanced, jaw lacking; *yüan* (元), jaw strong, nose weak; *mu* (木), brow weak, jaw strong; *yung* (用), strong, but chin lacking; *fêng* (風), a strong face.

GEOMANCY (陰陽), *yin yang*

It is the geomancer's work to select the site for a house: the direction in which it faces must not disagree with the life star of the owner. He decides how and where the doors and windows are to be placed; and which way it should be approached; hardly ever by a straight road. He also selects lucky days for beginning the foundations, for beginning the carpentry work, for putting up the frame-work; and above all, the lucky day and hour for hoisting the top beam on the roof. On this occasion the workmen have extra money, a feast, and the rest of the day free from work. He fixes the position for a burying place, and the way a grave will face. Traffic in the

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vicinity of the grave is stopped lest the spirit be disturbed. It is reckoned very unlucky to tread on or through a family graveyard.

To decide how a protecting wall round a grave should be built and when it may be built is the geomancer's duty, and when earth can be put on the graves. The proverb runs, *chêng, san, wu, ch'i, chiu, mu shên tso ti shou;* In the first, third, fifth, seventh and ninth moons, the spirit of the grave sits on the ground and guards; during these months no funerals of any importance are carried out and old graves are left severely alone.

He decides when the tombstone may be erected without disturbing the spirit of the grave, and fixes all the lucky times connected with a funeral. (See *Funerals.*)

Hsiu shêng chi (修生寄) is to prepare with the help of an astrologer the foundation for a grave before death, so as to be perfectly sure that it is all right; the coffin is often ready many years before.

Hsing chia is the astrologer who will look at the formation of a mountain before he will fix upon a grave. He makes much of the dragon, he uses the triad compass in his work. The triad is the *san ho* (三合), or heaven, earth and man.

Fa chia is the astrologer who simply decides the position of the grave, for prosperity to the progeny. He uses the eight-diagram compass. The *ts'ê* (擇) *chia* is an astrologer who simply decides lucky days, and is like the fortuneteller.

The following represents the transmigration or rotation of souls as far as the geomancer is concerned; hence his control over both the dwellings of the living and the dead. These stages are written on the above compass and used by both classes.

Born, 長生; washed, 沐浴; clothed, 冠帶; rank, 臨官; prosperity, 帝旺; aged, 衰; sick, 病; death, 死; buried, 墓; ended, 絕; conceived, 胎; nourished, 養.

To build a pagoda to make up a deficiency in the formation of the hills, or to break the monotony of a plain, in order that luck may attend the scholars of the district is called *p'ei fêng shui* (配風水) and *p'u wên fêng* (培文峯).

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To dig a little on the wrong side is to transgress the geomantic influences, *fan fêng shui*. This is reckoned very serious, and must be counteracted, sometimes by buildings being pulled down or pieces added, doors and windows being closed up and fresh ones being opened.

A building erected hundreds of *li* distant may spoil the geomantic influences of a district or town.